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## United States Department of Agriculture

### SERVICE AND REGULATORY ANNOUNCEMENT NO. 114

#### BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

## OFFICIAL UNITED STATES STANDARDS FOR GRADES OF VEAL AND CALF CARCASSES

EFFECTIVE JULY 16, 1928

Under an Act of Congress Approved May 16, 1928 (45 Stat. 539, 70th Cong.)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,  
Washington, D. C.

By virtue of the authority vested in the Secretary of Agriculture by the provision in the act of Congress entitled "An act making appropriations for the Department of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1929, and for other purposes," approved May 16, 1928 (45 Stat. 539), for acquiring and diffusing among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with the marketing, handling, utilization, grading, transportation, and distributing of farm and nonmanufactured food products, including the demonstration and promotion of the use of uniform standards of classification of American farm products throughout the world, I, W. M. Jardine, Secretary of Agriculture, do prescribe and promulgate the following standards for grades of veal and calf carcasses, to be known as Official United States Standards for Grades of Veal and Calf Carcasses, and to be in force and effect on and after July 16, 1928 and as long as Congress shall provide the necessary authority therefor, unless amended or superseded by standards hereafter prescribed and promulgated under such authority.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the Department of Agriculture to be affixed in the City of Washington, this 12th day of July, 1928.



*W M Jardine*  
Secretary of Agriculture.

### DEFINITIONS OF VEAL AND CALF CARCASSES

**Veal carcass.**—A veal carcass is one which is devided from the slapghter and dressing of an immature, milk-fed, bovine animal usually not over three months of age.

**Calf carcass.**—A calf carcass is one derived from the slaughter and dressing of an immature, bovine animal which for a considerable time had subsisted in part or entirely on feeds other than milk.

### MARKET GROUPS OF VEAL CARCASSES

Largely because veal is derived from relatively very young animals such carcasses are not sorted into so many market groups as are carcasses derived from older and more mature animals.

**Classes.**—Classes of carcasses are based on the sex condition of the animals which produce them. Hence, there are three classes of veal carcasses: Steer, heifer, and bull. But because veal carcasses are derived from very young animals, sex condition has not had time to exert an important influence on the conformation, finish, or quality of the animal or its carcass, and these animals are so young that very few of the males are castrated prior to slaughter. This practically eliminates the steer-veal class. For these reasons, in market practice, veal carcasses are not segregated into classes.

**Weight selections.**—Weight is an important consideration in marketing veal carcasses and for that reason such carcasses are divided into three weight groups—lightweight, medium weight, and heavyweight.

**Grades.**—Grading is the most important segregation of veal carcasses which is made during the process of marketing. Hence, such carcasses are divided into six grades ranging from Prime or No. A1 to Cull or No. 5.

#### Veal carcass schedule

Classes	Weight selections <sup>1</sup>	Grades
Steer } Heifer } Bull }	Lightweight—70 pounds down.....	(Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
	Medium weight—70 to 110 pounds.....	(Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
	Heavyweight—110 pounds up.....	(Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3.

<sup>1</sup> These weights are "skin off." To obtain "skin on" weights 10 per cent is added. In wholesale trade many veal carcasses are sold "skin on."

#### MARKET GROUPS OF CALF CARCASSES

Veal carcasses are never sorted into classes on the market but calf carcasses sometimes are sorted. As a rule calf carcasses are derived from animals which are somewhat older than those that produce veal. Some of the older members of the calf group make a fairly near approach to maturity. In such instances the sex condition of the animal has had time to exert some influence on its conformation, finish, and quality, and on that of its carcass. Hence, calf carcasses are sometimes sorted, bought, and sold on the basis of the class they represent.

**Classes.**—There are three classes of calf carcasses: Steer, heifer, and bull. Despite the fact that these classes are recognized on the market, the differences between calf carcasses of the various classes usually are so slight that it is almost impossible to describe accurately those differences in words. For that reason the Department of Agriculture has not felt justified in setting up separate grade standards for each class. It should be understood, therefore, that the grade standards which follow are applicable to all classes of calf carcasses.

**Weight selections.**—There are three weight selections of calf carcasses: Lightweight, mediumweight, and heavyweight.

**Grades.**—Grading is the most important segregation to which such carcasses are subjected in the process of marketing. Six grades are listed, ranging from Prime or No. A1 to Cull or No. 5.

The following schedule sets forth in graphic form the important groups into which calf carcasses are normally sorted and indicates the relationships which exist between the various groups.



## Calf carcass schedule

Classes	Weight selections <sup>1</sup>	Grades
Steer.....	Lightweight—110 pounds down.....	(Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.)
	Medium weight—110 to 165 pounds.....	(Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.)
	Heavyweight—165 pounds up.....	(Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.)
Heifer.....	Lightweight—110 pounds down.....	(Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.)
	Medium weight—110 to 165 pounds.....	(Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.)
	Heavyweight—165 pounds up.....	(Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.)
Bull.....	Lightweight—110 pounds down.....	(Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.)
	Medium weight—110 to 165 pounds.....	(Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.)
	Heavyweight—165 pounds up.....	(Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.)

<sup>1</sup> These weights are "skin off." To obtain "skin on" weights, 10 per cent is added. Many carcasses from very young calves are sold "skin on" in wholesale trade, whereas those from older and heavier calves are usually sold "skin off," in sides.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

The system of grading veal and calf carcasses, of which the following standards are a part, is based on the three grade factors: Conformation, finish, and quality.

The following are definitions of these terms as used in this system of grading.

**Conformation.**—Conformation is the form, shape, outline or contour of the carcass. It ranges from the smooth, plump, well-rounded, well proportioned conformation of the most highly developed carcass yet produced to the rough, rugged, irregular, disproportioned conformation of the thinnest, boniest, most poorly bred carcass produced.

**Finish.**—Finish is fat and includes the fat which appears on the outer surface of the carcass, on the inner walls of the chest and abdomen, around the kidneys and the seams of fat which sometimes lie between the larger muscles. Finish involves not only the quantity of fat but its quality and distribution. Finish ranges from that of the carcass which is almost completely covered both inside and outside with a smooth layer of firm fat, to that of the carcass which is totally lacking in discernible fat.

**Quality.**—Quality consists largely in characteristics of the flesh. It includes texture, tenderness, juiciness, flavor, and color. Quality also involves ratios or proportions of flesh to bone and of fat to lean meat, and the distribution of fat through the muscle tissues, commonly known as marbling. Quality, therefore, ranges from that of the small-boned, heavily fleshed, highly finished, well-proportioned carcass possessing a very high degree of tenderness, juiciness,

and flavor and very fine fiber or texture, to that of the very large-boned, thinly fleshed, ill-proportioned carcass with an extremely low degree of tenderness, juiciness, and flavor, and extreme coarseness in texture.

## SPECIFICATIONS FOR OFFICIAL UNITED STATES STANDARDS FOR GRADES OF VEAL AND CALF CARCASSES

### VEAL CARCASSES

There are six grades of veal carcasses: Prime or No. A1, Choice or No. 1, Good or No. 2, Medium or No. 3, Common or No. 4, and Cull or No. 5.

**Prime or No. A1.**—A Prime or No. A1 veal carcass very nearly approaches the ideal in conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape or outline it is very blocky and compact. It is very broad and deep in proportion to its length. All parts are very thick fleshed, each part having its proper proportionate thickness. Because of the thickness of fleshing the carcass presents a very plump, full, well-rounded appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in a very high proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are very short and thick. Rounds are very thick and bulging. Loin and back are very full and plump. Shoulders and breasts are very broad and thick. The neck is very short and thick.

There is a slightly thin covering of fat over the rump, loin, back, top of the shoulders, and over the inner walls of the chest and abdomen. There are large deposits of fat in the breast, flanks, and crotch, and around the kidneys. All exterior fat is very smooth. The color of fat is a creamy white tinged with pink.

The flesh ranges from light gray to pinkish brown in color, is very firm, fine-grained and, in a cut surface, is velvety to sight and touch. All bones are very small in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass and are very soft and red.

**Choice or No. 1.**—A Choice or No. 1 grade veal carcass is markedly superior in conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape or outline it is blocky and compact. It is broad and deep in proportion to its length. All parts are thickly fleshed, each part having its proper proportionate thickness. Because of the thickness of fleshing the carcass presents a plump, full, well-rounded appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in a high proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are short and thick. Rounds are thick and bulging. Loin and back are full and plump. Shoulders and breasts are broad and thick. The neck is short and thick.

There is a thin covering of fat over the rump, loin, back, and top of the shoulders, and over the inner walls of the chest and abdomen. There are moderately large deposits of fat in the breast, flanks, and crotch, and around the kidneys. All exterior fat is smooth. The color of fat is a creamy white tinged with pink.

The flesh ranges from light gray to pinkish brown in color. It is firm, fine-grained and, in a cut surface, is velvety to sight and touch. All bones are small in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass and are soft and red.

**Good or No. 2.**—A Good or No. 2 grade veal carcass possesses a moderately high degree of conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape or outline it tends to be blocky and compact. It is moderately broad and deep in proportion to its length. All parts are moderately thick-fleshed each part having its proper proportionate thickness. Because of the thickness of fleshing, the carcass presents a moderately plump, full, well-rounded appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in a moderately high proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are moderately short and thick. Rounds are moderately thick and bulging. Loin and back are moderately full and plump. Shoulders and breast are moderately broad and thick. The neck is moderately short and thick.

There is a very thin covering of fat over the loin and back and over the inner walls of the chest and abdomen. There are slightly small deposits of fat in the breast, flanks, and crotch, and around the kidneys. All exterior fat is moderately smooth. The color of fat is usually a creamy white.



The flesh ranges from a pinkish brown to a light tan in color, is moderately firm, fine-grained and, in a cut surface, is moderately velvety but may be slightly moist to sight and touch. All bones are moderately small in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass and are moderately soft and red.

**Medium or No. 3.**—A Medium or No. 3 grade veal carcass is slightly deficient in conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape or outline it is slightly rough and rangy. It is slightly narrow and shallow in proportion to its length. All parts are slightly deficient in fleshing, each part being proportionately lacking in this respect. Because of the relative thinness of fleshing the carcass presents a slightly empty, sunken, or hollowed-out appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in a slightly low proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are slightly long and thin. Rounds are slightly thin and tapering. Loins and ~~back~~ are slightly depressed. Shoulders and breast are slightly narrow and thin. The neck is slightly long and thin.

There are extremely thin patches of fat over the back and loin and over a portion of the inner walls of the chest and abdomen. There are very small deposits of fat in the breast, flanks, and crotch, and around the kidneys, the latter usually being incompletely covered. The color of fat is white but it lacks the pinkish tinge.

The flesh is usually pinkish-brown in color, is slightly soft, is coarse-grained and, in a cut surface, is slightly moist to the touch. All bones are slightly large in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass, are moderately soft but are slightly lacking in redness.

**Common or No. 4.**—A Common or No. 4 grade veal carcass is very deficient in conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape or outline it is very rough and rangy. It is very narrow and shallow in proportion to its length. All parts are very deficient in fleshing, each part being proportionately lacking in this respect. Because of the relative thinness of fleshing the carcass presents a very depressed or hollowed-out appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in a very low proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are very long and thin. Rounds are very thin and tapering. Loin and back are very shallow and depressed. Shoulders and breast are very narrow and thin. The neck is very long and thin.

There is no fat covering over the back, loin, or inner walls of the chest and abdomen. Usually there are extremely small deposits of fat in the breast, flanks, and crotch, and around the kidneys. The color of the fat usually is grayish-white tinged with yellow.

The flesh ranges from pinkish-brown to dark tan in color, is soft, very coarse-grained and, in a cut surface, is very moist to the touch. All bones are large in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass, are moderately soft but are lacking in redness.

**Cull or No. 5.**—A Cull or No. 5 grade veal carcass is extremely deficient in conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape or outline it is extremely rough and rangy. It is extremely narrow and shallow in proportion to its length. All parts are extremely deficient in fleshing, each part being proportionately lacking in this respect. Because of the relative thinness of fleshing the carcass presents an extremely shallow, depressed, or hollowed-out appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in an extremely low proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are extremely long and thin. Rounds are extremely thin and tapering. Loin and back are extremely depressed. Shoulders and breast are extremely narrow and thin. The neck is extremely long and thin.

There is no fat covering over any part of the exterior of the carcass and none on the inner walls of the chest and abdomen. There are no discernible fat deposits in the breast, flanks, or crotch, and only extremely small quantities around the kidneys.

The flesh usually is reddish-brown in color, is very soft, coarse-grained and watery. All bones are very large in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass and are decidedly lacking in softness and redness.

## CALF CARCASSES

There are six grades of calf carcasses: Prime or No. A1, Choice or No. 1, Good No. 2, Medium or No. 3, Common or No. 4, and Cull or No. 5.

**Prime or No. A1.**—A Prime or No. A1 grade calf carcass very nearly approaches the ideal in conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape or outline it is very blocky and compact. It is very broad and deep in proportion to its length. All parts are very thickly fleshed, each part having its proper proportionate thickness. Because of the thickness of fleshing the lines of the carcass present a very plump, full, well-rounded appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in a very high proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are very short and thick. Rounds are very thick and bulging. Loin and back are very full and plump. Shoulders and breasts are very broad and thick. The neck is very short and thick.

There is a thick covering of fat over the back and loin and a moderately thick fat covering over the rump and the top of the shoulders and over the inner walls of the chest and abdomen. There are large deposits of fat in the breast, flanks, and crotch, and around the kidneys. All exterior fat is very smooth and moderately firm. The color of the fat is white or slightly creamy.

The flesh ranges from a light tan to a reddish-brown in color, is very firm, fine-grained and, in a cut surface, is velvety to sight and touch. All bones are very small in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass and are moderately soft and red.

**Choice or No. 1.**—A Choice or No. 1 grade calf carcass is markedly superior in conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape or outline it is blocky and compact. It is broad and deep in proportion to its length. All parts are thickly fleshed, each part having its proper proportionate thickness. Because of the thickness of fleshing the lines of the carcass present a plump, full, well-rounded appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in a high proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are short and thick. Rounds are thick and bulging. Loin and back are full and plump. Shoulders and breasts are broad and thick. The neck is short and thick.

There is a moderately thick covering of fat over the back and loin and a moderately thin fat covering over the rump and the tops of the shoulders and over the inner walls of the chest and abdomen. There are moderately large deposits of fat in the breast, flanks, and crotch, and around the kidneys. All exterior fat is moderately smooth. The color of the fat ranges from white to a creamy white.

The flesh usually is reddish-brown in color, is firm and fine-grained. All bones are small in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass but are slightly lacking in redness.

**Good or No. 2.**—A Good or No. 2 grade calf carcass possesses a moderately high degree of conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape or outline it tends to be blocky and compact. It is moderately broad and deep in proportion to its length. All parts are moderately thick-fleshed, each part having its proper proportionate thickness. Because of the thickness of fleshing the lines of the carcass present a moderately plump, full, well-rounded appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in a moderately high proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are moderately short and thick. Rounds are moderately thick and bulging. Loin and back are moderately full and plump. Shoulders and breast are moderately broad and thick. The neck is moderately short and thick.

There is a slightly thin covering of fat over the loin and back and over the inner walls of the chest and abdomen. There is a very thin fat covering over the rump and tops of the shoulders. There are moderate deposits of fat in the breast, flanks, and crotch and around the kidneys. The color of the fat usually is a creamy white.

The flesh ranges from reddish-brown to a pale red, is moderately firm, fine-grained, and, in a cut surface, may be slightly moist to sight and touch. All bones are moderately small in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass and are only moderately red.



**Medium or No. 3.**—A Medium or No. 3 grade calf carcass is slightly deficient in conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape or outline it is slightly rough and rangy. It is slightly narrow and shallow in proportion to its length. All parts are slightly deficient in fleshing, each part being proportionately lacking in this respect. Because of the relative thickness of fleshing, the lines of the carcass present a slightly depressed, sunken or hollowed-out appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in a slightly low proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are slightly long and thin. Rounds are slightly thin and tapering. Loins and back are slightly shallow and depressed. Shoulders and breast are slightly narrow and thin. The neck is slightly long and thin.

There are small and thin patches of fat on the back and loin and extremely thin patches over the rump and the tops of the shoulders and on the inner walls of the chest and abdomen. There are small deposits of fat in the flanks, and crotch, and around the kidneys, the latter usually being only slightly covered. The color of the fat usually is a creamy white tinged with yellow.

The flesh usually is reddish-brown in color, is slightly soft, coarse-grained and, in a cut surface, is slightly watery in appearance. All bones are slightly large in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass, and are markedly lacking in redness.

**Common or No. 4.**—A Common or No. 4 grade calf carcass is very deficient in conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape and outline it is very rough and rangy. It is very narrow and shallow in proportion to its length. All parts are very deficient in fleshing, each part being proportionately lacking in this respect. Because of the relative thinness of the fleshing the lines of the carcass present a very depressed, sunken, or hollowed-out appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in a very low proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are very long and thin. Rounds are very thin and tapering. Loin and back are very shallow and depressed. Shoulders and breast are very narrow and thin. The neck is very long and thin.

There are extremely small and thin patches of fat on the back and loin with no discernible fat covering over the rump and the top of the shoulders or over the inner walls of the chest and abdomen. There are extremely small deposits of fat in the breast, flanks, and crotch, and around the kidneys. The fat usually has a decidedly yellow tinge.

The flesh usually is rather dark red in color, is soft, very coarse-grained and is very moist and watery. All bones are very large in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass and are very lacking in redness.

**Cull or No. 5.**—A Cull or No. 5 grade calf carcass is extremely deficient in conformation, finish, and quality.

In general shape or outline it is extremely rough and rangy. It is extremely narrow and shallow in proportion to its length. All parts are extremely deficient in fleshing, each part being proportionately lacking in this respect. Because of the relative thinness of fleshing the lines of the carcass present an extremely depressed, sunken, or hollowed-out appearance. The different parts are developed and balanced in such a way as to result in an extremely low proportion of back, loin, and round combined.

The shanks are extremely long and thin. Rounds are extremely thin and tapering. Loins and back are extremely shallow and depressed. Shoulders and breast are extremely narrow and thin. The neck is extremely long and thin.

There is usually no visible exterior fat and the interior fat is limited to extremely small amounts in the crotch and around the kidneys.

The flesh usually is slightly dark red in color, is very soft, coarse-grained and is very watery. All bones are extremely large in proportion to the size and weight of the carcass and extremely lacking in redness.

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